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a pair of guard members, one supported by each of the thigh portions and positioned to substantially cover the adjacent inner thighs of the wearer when the garment is worn.

Please rewrite claim 8 as follows:

a2

8. (Amended) The garment of claim 1 wherein the guard members are supported within pockets[**formed on the inner aspect of the thigh portions of the body**].

Please rewrite claim 18 as follows:

a3

18. (Amended) The garment of claim 17 wherein each guard member is supported in a pocket[**on the inner aspect of each thigh portion**].

Please add the following new claims:

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21. (New) An athletic garment for a person having adjacent inner thighs, the garment comprising:
a body including a pair of thigh portions; and
a pair of guard members, one supported by each of the thigh portions and positioned to substantially cover the adjacent inner thighs of the wearer when the garment is worn, whereby the guard members are substantially flush with the garment.

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~~22.~~ (New) The garment of claim ~~21~~ wherein the garment is a pair of shorts.

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23. (New) The garment of claim ~~21~~¹ wherein the body of the garment is formed of elastic material.

~~24~~⁴. (New) The garment of claim ~~23~~³ wherein the garment is a pair of shorts.

~~25~~⁵. (New) The garment of claim ~~21~~¹ wherein the guard members are shock absorbent.

~~26~~⁶. (New) The garment of claim ~~21~~¹ wherein the guard members are deflective.

~~27~~⁷. (New) The garment of claim ~~26~~⁶ wherein the guard members are shock-absorbent.

Sub B2 > ~~28~~⁸. (New) The garment of claim ~~21~~¹ wherein the guard members are supported within pockets formed on the inner aspect of the thigh portions of the body.

~~29~~⁹. (New) The garment of claim ~~28~~⁸ wherein the guard members are non-removably supported in the pockets.

~~30~~¹⁰. (New) The garment of claim ~~21~~¹ wherein each guard member comprises a deflective layer.

~~31~~¹¹. (New) The garment of claim ~~30~~¹⁰ wherein each guard member further comprises a shock-absorbing layer.

~~32~~¹². (New) The garment of claim ~~31~~¹¹ wherein the deflective layer is flexible.

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33. (New) The garment of claim 32 wherein the shock-absorbing layer is flexible.

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34. (New) The garment of claim 33 wherein the deflective layer is plastic.

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35. (New) The garment of claim 34 wherein the shock-absorbing layer is compressible.

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36. (New) The garment of claim 35 wherein the shock-absorbing layer is foam.

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37. (New) The garment of claim 36 wherein in each guard member the deflective layer is under the compressible layer.

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38. (New) The garment of claim 37 wherein each guard member is supported in a pocket on the inner aspect of each thigh portion.

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39. (New) The garment of claim 38 wherein each guard member is non-removably supported within the pocket.

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40. (New) The garment of claim 39 wherein the garment is a pair of shorts made of flexible, elastic material.